GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3032
ANSWERED ON:05.09.2007
THEFT OF PASSPORTS
Naik Shri Shripad Yasso;Tripathi Shri Chandramani

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Diplomatic Passports were found missing from the Government Printing Press, Nashik in Maharashtra, as reported in 'Asian Age' dated May 28, 2007;

(b) whether incident of theft of passports from Palam Airport has also been reported;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the passports reported missing have been recovered;

(e) if not, the steps taken to recover them;

(f) the precautions taken against misuse of these blank Diplomatic Passports by unauthorized persons; and

(g) the steps envisaged to prevent the recurrence of such cases in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a), (b)& (c) 500 ordinary passport booklets which were sent by India Security Press, Nashik through Speed Post to the Diplomatic Bag Section of the Ministry of External Affairs for onward despatch to Indian Missions abroad were stolen at Palam Airport, Delhi.

(d), (e) & (f) The Delhi Police has recovered 467 passport booklets and 33 are still missing. The Delhi Police is making efforts to trace the remaining 33 passport booklets and to arrest the culprits. In the meanwhile, the Ministry has revoked all 33 missing passport booklets to prevent their misuse.

(g) It has been decided that all consignments of travel documents originating from ISP, Nashik will henceforth be designated as sensitive material and Department of Posts will ensure greater vigilance till their receipt by the consignee. A software system is also being developed to track and monitor movement of travel documents with automatic alarm generation provision for non-receipt of consignment within the stipulated time.